

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A method and apparatus for pretreating or conditioning lignocellulose fiber containing feed material in preparation for conversion to pulp. Wood chips are pretreated under conditions of elevated temperature, pressure and humidity and subsequently compressed to cause destructuring of the fibers of the feed material. The pretreated wood chips are then converted to pulp using such methods as the ground wood pulping process or chemical digestion process.

5

08907687, 080897